

Instructions: We have allotted two hours for small group discussions to allow each participant to participate in two topic groups. At 12:45 pm, participants will choose a group. (Facilitators have been assigned from among Council members.) Each group will choose a recorder (to write on the flip-chart) and a reporter to report back to the full group. Starting with the questions provided, the group will engage in a 45-minute discussion with thoughts being captured on the flip chart. The group will then prioritize two or three issues or items to be reported back to the full group at 2:45 pm.

At 1:40 pm, participants will choose another topic group and repeat the process.

Governance (facilitated by Bob Watt and Blanca Fernandez)

- What governance options would provide high visibility and independence for early learning?
- What steps should be taken to ensure that children and families are the central focus in our early learning model?
- How do we incorporate public-private partnerships into the governance structure? What does that look like?
- What programs (and funding streams) need to be included, e.g., child care subsidies, licensing, ECEAP, Maternal and Child Health, special needs preschools, school-age care?
- How do we balance the need to help providers and teachers grow professionally with being able to move quickly to protect child safety and health?
- How do we improve transitions between early learning and K-12 and Higher Education?

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Early Learning Vision, Mission and Goals (facilitated by Greg Shaw and Maria Vera)

Definitions:

A **vision** is a short, succinct, and inspiring statement of what the organization intends to become and to achieve at some point in the future. Vision refers to the category of intentions that are broad, and forward-thinking. It describes aspirations for the future, without specifying the means that will be used to achieve those desired ends.

A **mission statement** is an organization's vision translated into written form. It makes concrete the direction and purpose of the organization. A mission statement should be a short and concise statement of the organization's priorities.

A **goal** is specific, realistic and measurable.

Questions:

- The following vision statement was developed by the Leadership Council for Early Care and Education (formerly the Washington State Child Care Coordinating Committee: *Through quality care and education, beginning at birth, every child will succeed in school and life, **and** Washington has a well-functioning and integrated system of state and local agencies, community partners and families focused on quality care and education.* What do you like about this statement of vision? What's missing? What would you change?
- Based on the vision (as modified above) what might the mission statement include?
- What measurable goals should the Council be seeking to achieve? (You may want to consult the Early Learning Council legislation).

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Public Engagement and Outreach (facilitated by Regina Jones and Robin Denney)

- What is the message? How do we create excitement?
- Who are our audiences? Which audiences will be hard to reach?
- How do we build credibility with stakeholders and key decision makers?
- What are our dissemination strategies?
- What messages and outreach strategies will reach specific audiences?
- How do we engage community members, organizations and leaders, as well as unusual messengers, in helping with dissemination?

Early Learning Council
Small Group Discussions
September 28, 2005

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Quality Rating and Tiered Reimbursement (facilitated by Graciela Valencia, Nancy Gerber, and Bridgett Chandler)

- What should the goals of the quality rating system be?
- Where does licensing fit into the system, i.e., should a provider get one star for being licensed?
- What should a five star (highest quality) program look like? What is the balance between best practice and what's readily achievable?
- Should requirements be allowed to vary between child care centers and family child care homes so long as desired outcomes for children remain the same?